people remained non-Hindu in their basic beliefs and social customs. Hindu influences are nevertheless predominant in their culture, especially in their way of living which shows a practical adaptability, somewhat similar to the Japanese acceptance of modern western culture without becoming Christian. In my census of Shella village, the people calling themselves 'Hindu' amount to 40 per cent of the total, but they are the recent converts to the Ramakrishna School which established a missionary station at Shella after the Partition. The Christians constitute 30 per cent of the total, most of them having been converted during the last ten years, as in the case of the Ramakrishna School.[1] The rest remain as they were, of Khasi belief.[2] These conversions to either Ramakrishna or Christianity seem to have been encouraged by the unstable situation of the people resulting from the recent economic depression in this area.

The Partition of India and Pakistan in August 1947, which drew the border-line a few miles south of Shella village, considerably upset village economy by stopping all trade with Bengal, though a limited amount of trade is allowed with local people at the border. Because of this political change, all the produce of Shella gardens is rotting away for lack of markets, while all of the rice which was taken by Pakistan. Goods now come to Shella only from the uplands, carried upon men's shoulders over the most difficult pass, which makes everything very expensive. Many families have sold their gold and other treasures, and some families are facing starvation.[3]

Concerning the conversion to a new religion, an interesting phenomenon is to be observed. The conversion to Christianity or to Ramakrishna is mostly by individual. I found in my census that the wife and husband often belong to different religions. This is a very different picture from the Garo, among whom I always found that the husband and wife belonged to the same religion: the conversion of the husband to Christianity was always followed by that of the wife. I think this reflects the structural differences which influence the actual relationship between the husband and wife. Among these Khasi, instead of the husband and wife, the maternal uncle and his nephews and nieces are mostly of the same religion. The function of the ring, the most important social and religious unit, thus appears also in the conversion to a new religion, stronger than that of a domestic unit.

Intermarriage

The close economic and cultural contact of the Shella people and the Bengalese is not matched by social contact. The essential barrier between the two peoples is the difference of religion which dominates the entire social order in such society. Though these Khasi were important traders, richer than the neighbouring Hindu peasants, they were considered by the Hindu as outcasts with whom they never shared social activities. Intermarriages were therefore very rare. In Shella village, only two exceptional cases were found in my census:

1. A Khasi woman married to a Gurkha (cattle-keeper), they live at Shella Bazaar (Shella);
2. A Khasi woman has marital relation with a Bengalee medical doctor who has resided at Dkaing in Shella for six years. He already has a Bengalee

1. These two entirely different missionary activities are competing with each other, and are somewhat related to the political powers within this area.

2. The state government is doing its best to provide them with additional facilities: for example, providing air transport for the transportation of oranges from Shella to Gauhati and Calcutta. However, such arrangements cannot cover the great economic loss suffered by the Shella people.

there are some of their descendants in Jaintiapur. Summing up, the first party who settled at Jaintiapur was composed of people of the following five clans:

a. Suchiang — Lakhanthang, his sister, Lapriloi, and her daughter, Khorkam, his brother, Pyntiah.
b. Suchen — Wanik and his younger brother, Sain.
c. Thawroar — Sinthon and her younger sister, Dienthon.
d. Rupsi — Suniu, the wife of Pyntiah.
e. Dainen — Tuhon, the wife of Sain.

Among them, Suchen had no female member. Thawroar had no successor. Sinthon had no issue and Dienthon did not marry. Therefore, Suchiang, Rupsi and Dainen are the oldest clans in present Jaintiapur. Suchiang and Rupsi especially are the dominant and richest groups among the present population.

This was the time when the railway from Gauhati to Silchar was being constructed. Some Khasi labourers were working at Hadhog on the construction of the railway. After the foundation of Jaintiapur, these Khasi workers established marriage relations with the Khasi of Jaintiapur, and finally, upon completion of the railway, many of them became the inhabitants of Jaintiapur. The present members of the Dkhar and Sangphai clans are the descendants of these people, and they form a considerable number of the present inhabitants of Jaintiapur. Besides them, there were a few other Khasi at Hadhog who were engaged in trading business. In the course of time, they also had marital relations with Jaintiapur people and came to Jaintiapur.

After five years had elapsed they found that in spite of their hard work the land was not favourable to them. Many of them left Jaintiapur. This was the earliest period of Jaintiapur history.

The second migration (1919-1925).

The railway which once had been blocked was reopened in 1919. The people who had left Jaintiapur came back to settle there. This time the circumstances seemed to them quite favourable. The pan trees which they had planted earlier were growing and they could gather considerable produce. The village grew bigger around 1920 as a result of new immigrants from Jaintia, most of them were people from Bataw, the village of the founder. In this period, many immigrants came from Jaintia not only to Jaintiapur but also to Sylhet, Barkhola and other places outside the Khasi-Jaintia Hills. It seems that by this time the over-populated Jaintia realised that these areas were favourable for their new home. However, the successive waves of Jaintia immigrants to Jaintiapur ceased by 1925, its population having reached saturation point.

Orange production brought economic prosperity to the people of Jaintiapur. Wealthy villagers employed temporary labourers from the Jaintia Hills every year. Some of these labourers came with their families and others came individually. During their stay at Jaintiapur, some of them married and settled there. Hence, there are also descendants of such labourers among the present inhabitants of Jaintiapur.

Some Aspects of Descent Groups.

Throughout the history of Jaintiapur, immigrations have always been undertaken by a family (elementary family, siblings) or by an individual, but never by a group of clan members. Therefore, the present population is grouped in small descent groups according to each migration. Though some of them happened to have the same clan name, their history of migration and their

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workers and they were few in number.[1] They were particularly employed for cash-work as the clearing of jungle for new jhum gardens in autumn.

In the orange season (December to February) the number of workers increased and they were paid more. Rs. 1.8 were paid for one load (one person carrying 80 pounds of oranges, from an orange garden to the railway station - about two miles). Usually a worker made three to five trips a day. Many workers from Jaintia used to come for this particular season.

Non-permanent workers were engaged to wet rice fields. They were usually Khasi cultivators since these Khasi and other tribes do not know the technique of wet cultivation, plains people like the Biharee immigrants were engaged. These workers were provided with servants' quarters where they lived with their wives and children. However, very few Jaintiapu households possessed rice fields.

The economic prosperity of Jaintiapu reached its climax during the period from 1939 to 1946. Since 1947, the orange production has been decreasing. In 1953, a serious disease attacked the orange gardens as well as the pan-leaf gardens. Besides, by dispersing Jaintiapu, as it had Sheila, of their most important markets, Dacca and Sylhet, the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 caused a serious economic depression in the whole region. On the other hand, because of the past prosperity, the population has rapidly increased during the last ten years. The serious economic condition of Jaintiapu is illustrated in the petition which was submitted by the Jaintiapu people when the Governor of Assam visited them even in January 1956. It runs thus:

"Since the last ten years or so, with the increase of population in the village and with the loss of fertility of the soil, the people were faced with economic depression. At present they are facing acute shortage of land they have also no scope to adopt other forms of cultivation like plantation and wet rice cultivation etc. Moreover, there has been successive attack of Bright's disease which destroyed and wiped out all the oranges and pan gardens. And as such, majority of the families have to depend for their livelihood on daily wages.

It is indeed a serious situation for them, because the Khasi do not produce staple foods, such as rice, their economy is completely dependent on the trade of their products by which they purchase their main provisions, clothes, etc. Other peoples round Jaintiapu, being jhum cultivators, can at least get rice and cotton; the minimum requirements, staple foods and clothing are available even in the worst conditions, so that they can at least maintain themselves though the standard of living is low. As I stated before, a few households in Jaintiapu possessed rice fields, but the majority had none. Recently they rented some plots of jhum field for rice-cultivation from Zemi-Nagas of neighbouring villages.[2] However, its yield was but a small percentage of their consumption. A few

1. If they had worked in the gardens of Jaintiapu, they might have got more profit than from their own jhum fields. For one day's labour, they got Ans. 8. For one month, they could earn Rs. 15 with which they could buy about 4-5 maunds of rice (one maunds paddy cost Rs. 3-4). For one year it became 50 maunds, which was impossible to produce in a jhum field by a single person's labour.

2. These rates, including the figures of note 1, apply to 1956.

3. Jaintiapu villagers told me that Zemi-Nagas were kind enough to lend them their field for a negligible rent, though they had not enough for themselves. Zemi-Nagas said that they owed much to Jaintiapu in the past, so that now they sympathised with the condition of Jaintiapu, and offered some parts of their jhum field.

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CHAPTER III

The Border Area

3. 1 **Definition of Border Area.**—The term 'border area' although very frequently used does not refer to any well demarcated area. It was, therefore, decided after a joint discussion between the Director of Statistics with the Deputy Commissioners of the districts and Subdivisional Officers, Jamrud, that area within 20 miles of the Indo-Pak border line would be considered as the 'border area' for the purpose of the present survey. The list of the villages falling in the area was supplied by the Deputy Commissioner and the Subdivisional Officer.

3. 2 **Conditions of the Border Area before partition.**—The border area under review was comprised of the southern slopes of the Khasi and Jamrud Hills and a narrow strip of plains adjoining the mountainous slopes running along the Pakistan border. The area extends laterally over a length of about 120 miles, roughly from Mahmandis on the east to Sangbar on the west thus covering an area of 2,400 square miles approximately, comprising of 484 villages inhabited by population of 34 thousands.

Barring the barren and rocky top plateau the slopes are utilized for the production of valuable cash crops on terraced areas. These slopes provide suitable soil and climate for the production crops like almonds, peaches, betelnut, mangos, pomegrates and other fruits. On account of rich yields which such plantations give to the cultivators these slopes were, more densely inhabited and intensively cultivated than the rest of the area on the topography of the area. Even the non-terraceable waste in the slopes has been converted into such orchards, wherever the produce was carried by headloads over steep gradients for several miles. Due to steep gradients little other use, except some grazing here and there, could be made of this area.

Because of the very topography, this land had its natural communications with Jallbad district now forming part of East Pakistan. From time immemorial the area had a flourishing trade with Jallbad district. It was a two-way traffic. The cash crops found eager buyers in the people of Jallbad, from whom in turn the people in the border area obtained supplies of rice, fish, vegetables and other necessities of daily life. This in proportion does the export a very prosperous and active economy. The ruin buildings in the border area villages which are now fallening away, bear eloquent testimony to the past prosperity of the border economy.

With the partition of the country in 1947, trade with the plains of Jallbad, now forming part of East Pakistan, was restricted. As a result the whole economy of this region was completely shattered and the countryside which once hummed with activity and abundance was overshadowed with unemployment, poverty and despair. All the cash earnings mainstay of the border people lies the market in East Pakistan. For want of communication facilities the produce could not be

compared to other parts of Indian Union. The prices of some of the daily items recorded a disproportionate fall as compared to others. The price of mango which used to fetch Rs. 10-00 or Rs. 12-00 per lot (1,000 in lot) suddenly shrunk down to Rs. 2-00 or Rs. 10-00 per lot, that of betel-nut which used to sell at Rs. 20-00 to Rs. 22-00 per lot (5,000 betel-nuts in lot) came down to Rs. 2-00 to Rs. 4-00 per lot. Tobacco and other luxury articles suffered equally. The worst of all was that even at this rock bottom price the produce was not sold. The following figure quoted from the memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister by the Nagpur People's Association which are claimed to have been collected from authoritative sources are indicative of the extent to which the trade in agricultural produce was paralysed.

Statement 6.5

Statement showing Gross Untaxed Retail & Wholesale Prices in Rupees per Hundred before and after partition

(In thousand units)

Items	Pre-partition export	Pre-partition import				
1. Oranges	12,000	2,000	12.0	10.0	1.0	12.0
2. Betels	6,000	800	20.0	40.0	200.0	240
3. Tangerin	3,000	400				
4. Vegetables	1,000	800	12.0	32.0	72.0	48.0
5. Arecanuts	1,000	200	--	--	--	--
6. Betel	10	--	--	--	--	--
7. Betel-leaves	2,000	400	2.0	2.0	100.0	80.0
8. Betel-nuts, cane, tobacco, etc.		--	--	--	--	--
9. Spices, turmeric, chillies, pepper.	20	05	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2
10. Fruits, Bananas, plums, pine-apples, jack-fruits, pears and papaya.	1,200	200	12.0	20.0	50.0	24.0
11. Limestone	24,000	17,000	12,00.00	6,000	1,200	1,000

The difficulty of getting adequate supply of foodgrains and other necessities of daily life posed a serious problem. Due to communication difficulties arrangement for adequate supply of these commodities from other parts of Indian Union could not be made. The supply from

[illegible]

[illegible] East Pakistan to which the people in the border areas were entitled on the strength of various trade agreements of the Government of India with the authorities in Pakistan, were also many. The situation was still more aggravated due to the stringent measures adopted by authorities in Pakistan, on the plea of prevention of smuggling, in the matter of [illegible] across the entire border trade seriously came to a standstill.

This state of border economy has resulted in widespread unemployment among the border people. There being no market for the products, the owners ceased to take proper care of their orchards and plantations. As a result thousands of labourers who were employed in the orchards were thrown out of employment. Similar was the condition of those who were employed in the transportation of various commodities such as merchandise of trade etc. A large section of the people engaged in cultivation of tobacco were also rendered unemployed with the set back received by the trade in tobacco with East Pakistan. Due to stoppage of [illegible] trade, petty traders engaged in distributive trade, also suffered.

Many of the border people possessing paddy lands and orchards in areas that are located in Pakistan, had to abandon them. The following table will show the amount of land lying in Pakistan belonging to the farmers in the selected villages of border area :—

TABLE A-3

Name of villages	Area of land lost through partition		
	No. of families who possessed land in Pakistan	Area (acres)	Average per family (acres)
1. [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
2. [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
3. [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
4. [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
5. [illegible]	[illegible]	--	--
6. [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
7. [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
8. [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
9. [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
10. [illegible]	[illegible]	--	--

A few families who did not have any landed interest on this side of the border were reported to have migrated to Pakistan. Most of the families are even now paying tax to East Pakistan authorities even though they are not getting any returns because they do not want to lose their right on land.

Extent of area—

1. [illegible]	Paddy and millets	...	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	[illegible]
2. [illegible]	Paddy, millets and [illegible]		Oxen, hoes and ploughs	No
3. [illegible]	Paddy, millets etc.	...	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	No
4. [illegible]	Paddy, millets and pulses	...	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	No
5. [illegible]	Paddy, millets and millets	...	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	No
6. [illegible]	Paddy, millets and millets	...	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	Oxen and [illegible]
7. [illegible]	Paddy, pulses and millets	...	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	[illegible]
8. [illegible]	Paddy and millets	...	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	No
9. [illegible]	Paddy, pulses and millets	...	Oxen and hoes	No
10. [illegible]	Pulses, millets, paddy and [illegible]		Oxen and hoes	No

This table reveals that in one region cholam is [illegible] for each crops and in the other for food crops or one depending upon the soil and topography of the regions. Extreme hardship occurs when there is deficiency in food production or a glut in the market of such crops. The cash crop producers are, of course, trying to adapt their crops to the changing market conditions. With the [illegible] of markets for oranges, the people in the border areas are trying to increase their [illegible] production and start cultivating paddy, pulses, etc. Throughout the district, people are trying to increase wet paddy cultivation. Wherever water is available, they spare no pain to convert it into a wet paddy field. Similarly, increasing interest is evident among the people in the cultivation of valuable crops like black-pepper, cashewnut, etc., which have a good prospect in the border areas. It is felt that there is considerable scope for intensification of cultivation of chillies, turmeric, coffee, etc. But any new enterprise demands heavy initial investment which often is not within the reach of cultivators. Government should continue to advance adequate agricultural loans to the needy cultivators in a better planned manner.

Only 19 out of 20 villages reported use of bullock driven ploughs for wet paddy cultivation. But even in these villages animal power is not universally used. Of course, in the rocky fields people have no alternative to the use of hoes and spades but in some areas particularly in the wet paddy field, bullock driven ploughs may profitably be utilised. It is not that the farmers do not realise the advantage of ploughing but want of funds for purchase of bullocks, etc., is reported to be the cause of continuance of the old practice. Both broadcasting and transplanting methods are in vogue in paddy cultivation the latter being a recent introduction is gaining popularity. Some farmers in the project area villages have tried line sowing but according to them it is very laborious and amounts to